

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### **EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Samir S. Khoury on 9 June 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 1, line 3, after "opening" added --, one of said first and second sidewalls of the first frame member having a hole formed therein--; line 4, ", similar to the first frame member, and" has been deleted; line 5, --and having a first sidewall, a second sidewall, and a bottom wall-- has been inserted after "section"; line 6, "at least" has been replaced with --the--; line 7, after "member", --having the hole formed therein adjacent the hole such that the second frame member first sidewall is laterally spaced from the hole on one side of the hole, the second frame member second sidewall is laterally spaced from the hole on an opposite side of the hole, and the second frame member bottom wall is vertically spaced from a bottom side of the hole,-- has been inserted.

Claim 11, lines 2-4, the phrase "said second frame member having an end portion connected to one of the first and second sidewalls of the first frame member, and wherein said one of said first and second sidewalls of the first frame member has a hole formed therein; and," has been deleted.

Claim 12, after "opening" added --, one of said first and second sidewalls of the first frame member has a hole formed therein--; line 4, ", similar to the first frame member, and" deleted; line 5, after "section" added --and having a first sidewall, a second sidewall, and a bottom wall--; line 6, "at least" has been replaced with --the--; and line 23, after "therein",

inserted --wherein the second frame member first sidewall is laterally spaced from the hole on one side of the hole, the second frame member second sidewall is laterally spaced from the hole on an opposite side of the hole, and the second frame member bottom wall is vertically spaced from a bottom side of the hole;--.

Claims 7-9, 15, and 16, line 1, "Withdrawn" has been changed to --Original--.

### *Allowable Subject Matter*

Claims 1-4, 7-9, 11, 12, and 14-19 are allowed.

As to claims 1 and 12, the closest prior art, Wycech (US 6,270,600 B1), discloses a frame joint structure as claimed with the exception of the second frame member first sidewall being laterally spaced from the hole on one side of the hole, the second frame member second sidewall being laterally spaced from the hole on an opposite side of the hole, and the second frame member bottom wall being vertically spaced from a bottom side of the hole. The importance of such feature is described, for example, in paragraph [0049] of the specification.

There is no teaching or suggestion, absent the applicants' own disclosure, for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the connector device as disclosed by Wycech (US 6,270,600 B1) to provide the hole in the sidewall as claimed instead of the smooth transitioning between the first and second frame members as currently taught by Wycech (US 6,270,600 B1) which defines the opening into which the insert is stamped and does not otherwise provide a connecting portion to reduce reduction in strength in the vicinity of the hole.

The election requirement has been withdrawn because allowable claims 1 and 12 are considered to be generic and the previously withdrawn claims 7-10 depend from claim 1 while claims 15 and 16 depend from claim 12, these claims are now rejoined and allowable for the same reasons as indicated above.

### *Conclusion*

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nahid Amiri whose telephone number is (571) 272-8113. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-5:30. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571) 272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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